

**MAN**

**UP**

**OR MAN DOWN?**

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# It's Time To Wake Up

Do you know what the biggest killer of men under the age of 45 is?

No it's not traffic accidents, drugs, alcohol or even a type of cancer...

***It's suicide.***

In the UK there were 4,623 male suicides last year. **That's 12 a day.**

76% of all suicides are by men with the rate of suicides by women declining and by men rapidly rising.

42% of men aged 18-45 have considered suicide and ***every 2 hours a man takes his own life in the UK.***

But why?

**In this book you'll discover 5 principles behind the real way of 'Manning Up'...**

Society hasn't dealt us a great hand to play with.

As a man we're bombarded with pressures, with pressures at work, providing for a family, paying bills and keeping up with friends.

I'm not saying we have more to deal with than women, we don't... but dealing with these pressures is where things become more difficult.

Society paints a picture of a man as a masculine figure who would show weakness if he cried or showed emotion.

A man has come to believe that masculinity comes in the form of dealing with these pressures naturally, being alpha and showing strength through working through and forgetting these pressures.

But this picture, this outlook on how men should be...

... is killing us.

***It's time to change the way we look at things.***

# Rewind 6 Years Ago...

Now this is something I've never shared before.

Something I've held back from talking about and something I've avoided sharing because of worrying what others might think.

But if this story can help just one person, I'd be happy.

This is a watered down version of a story which turned my life around. It was the hardest 6 months of my life and something I hope other people wouldn't have to go through.



That's me, rocking the tightest blue 'Speedos' with my brother and Dad when I was 5 years old.

At 18... I lost my Dad to suicide.

I had a pretty amazing childhood, I was loved by both my parents, my brother was my best friend and throughout school (from an outside perspective) I was a confident, educated, outgoing boy.

My Dad was stable in his career, he was loved by his family, friends, and most importantly looked after himself.

He had a psychology degree, was a keen athlete, Physiotherapist and read a lot of self help books.

In fact a 'keen athlete' doesn't describe half of it. He ran daily, often twice a day and ate and drank well. He competed at the National Veteran Athletics Championship back when I was 15, racing in the 1500m race and won.

He was a Football (soccer) referee and used to be pretty good player when he was younger...

But as an active man, with a loving family and a stable work and financial situation... out of nowhere he had a 'breakdown'. Going from being the

person he always was to being put on anti-depressants.

My dad had a very holistic approach to health, he wouldn't even take a paracetamol to cure a migraine. So when he accepted anti-depressants from the doctor we knew something was wrong.

Looking back, I wish he didn't. These drugs, these anti-depressants are strong... and in the UK they seem to be handed out like a pack of Sweets.

I have nothing against people taking them, and of course I'm not talking about every doctor... but the risks involved aren't typically provided.

They're not some 'magic pill' that cures the sh\*t that's going on inside our heads.

I truly believe real mental help for the underlying issues should be given before these are prescribed.

My Dad's breakdown was completely out of the blue. He got prescribed a pretty high dose of anti-depressants and was told after a few days if they had no effect to up the dose slightly.

Nobody expected him to be upset like this, struggling to handle day to day life. What was going on?

My dad was never one to really show his emotions.

In fact he wasn't really a manly guy, he was very sensitive, polite and loving towards his family. But with this being said, he was never really one to shed a tear.

After his breakdown we supported him as a family. It was still an extremely confusing situation though and something we of course thought would pass.

Initially it only really was my Mum, my brother and me who knew and the support we gave him always seemed short lived. He'd open up, we'd support him, he'd brush off his emotions and get on with life... only to then breakdown again.

From the initial breakdown, from him opening up to the challenges he was facing and breaking down into tears within 2 weeks he tried to take his own life.

It shocked everybody.

He'd called for an Ambulance as he was getting suicidal thoughts and was seeking help. They took him in, called us about what had happened and as he waited in A&E decided enough was enough. He walked out, walked to the main road and walked in front of van.

We were on our way there from work as soon as the phone call happened, but the feeling of helplessness is a feeling I simply can't describe.

After the accident, and after being told to say goodbye to him by the Nurse, he was transferred to another hospital where he had a blood clot removed from his brain. He spent 6 days in a coma.

He recovered.

Those 6 days seemed like 6 months. Confusion about what had happened, why he did it and what he was going to be like when/if he came round was draining.

It took him a while to come round, and once he did couldn't remember what happened.

Phew.

Maybe he's going to be fine now?

We hoped.

He never got back to the person we always knew.

He always denied the fact he'd tried to take his own life, blaming it on the medication which at the time seemed true. But looking back, maybe it was just embarrassment because as a man not being able to deal with challenges isn't something you'd easily admit.

He spent 5 months in and out of a mental health unit, and at times felt to be handling everything well... until he took his life in March 2009 by walking in front of a lorry...

... just 6 months after his first breakdown.

6 months.

From 'feeling low' to trying to take his life twice.

It shocked everyone, from us to his friends, his co workers, everyone asked why? He had everything going for him, he was happy, why do something like that?

It took me years to realise that as men life can become pretty difficult.

It took me years to realise why he did it, and it took me years to realise how to deal with it like a 'real man'.

A real man isn't that alpha character portrayed who shrugs his shoulders, says 'Sh\*t happens' and buries his head in distractions.

Initially I did.

I buried my feelings, my anger and my thoughts deep inside and spent more time working, going out and doing things to avoid having to think about it.

I was always compared to my Dad too, in terms of our personality, the things we enjoyed and even the way we looked. I went through a stage of thinking that comparison was a negative, thinking because of the comparison I'd end up the same way as him.

To be honest, I even went through periods of suicidal thoughts around a year after it happened...

Reflecting on this, I seriously believe these thoughts were me trying to re-live his situation to try and understand why he did it.

I saw how easy suicide could be...

It wasn't until self reflection and looking to grow as a person led me to deal with how the situation affected me.

I changed...

I discovered new ways to deal with my thoughts, to deal with pressures and how to consistently improve as a man. I went from feeling unfulfilled, unhappy in a job I didn't enjoy and not really caring how I looked to self happiness, running a successful online business and magazine and being featured on GQ, Vogue and French Connection to name a few.

It took me 6 years to share my story, and I haven't even gone into this much detail with my closest friends.



I accepted the decision he made, I'm extremely grateful for what an amazing Dad he was to me, and I will never blame him for anything he put us through.

This acceptance didn't come easy...

I see my Dad in a different light because I've dealt with the pain like a real man.

I've not buried it, masking it with work, getting drunk, partying and sports cars... I've dealt with it by handling my thoughts.

In this book, I'm going to share some of the principles I learnt along the way to show you the real definition of 'Man Up'.

***Put the ego away, forget about how much you can deadlift for a moment and be open to what I have to say.***

It could change you like it changed me...



# 1. Open Up

This comes from personal experiences, working with others and years of self reflection. It's something us men don't do often. The first stage to dealing with any challenges you might be facing is to simply talk about them.



Ever walked into work and seen a woman upset in tears? Sure it catches your attention and makes you wonder what's wrong but typically you pretty quickly believe she'll be ok.

But what happens if you walk in to work and you see a male employee crying his eyes out and getting consoled? It's more of a shock right?

Men do have issues with opening up, and it's most likely down to society and the masculine traits we're all told to live by. But not letting go of emotions and opening up to how you truly feel is killing us.

Seriously.

We mask our emotions and replace them with short term solutions.

If we feel worried, anxious or depressed about a situation we push it back and replace it with distractions.

We work more, buy more, drink more and even date more. Football, the gym, social media and starting 'banter' are again all distractions we use to mask the underlying sh\*t we've got going on.

These distractions that mask how we truly feel make us feel good for short periods but deep down the worry, the anxiety and the depression simply hasn't been dealt with.

It's still there.

Marinating, getting worse and ready to arise at a time when you're not ready.

Years pass, sometimes even months and the issues we've been distracting ourselves from suddenly resurface, causing breakdowns, deep depressions and simply not wanting to live anymore.

All because we didn't open up, deal with them and instead masked them with short term fulfilment.

Sure it's one of the hardest things to do, but it's a lot easier than 80% of the things you do day to day.

It's just because you're not used to opening up...

The majority of women find it easier to open up, they find it easier to let go, to talk about their issues with their friends... We don't.

Sure, the pub on a Friday night with 5 of your mates might not feel like the right place to let go and open up but it's important you let go and open up somehow.

A close friend, a family member, a counsellor or even giving CALM a call (they have a support line at [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)) will all have a huge effect on how you feel.

***'The feeling is almost like when you've been dying for a piss and you finally get to go.'***

I remember reading this and it's probably the most manliness way of explaining the benefits of letting go.

When you finally open up, let go of your issues and release your emotions the feeling is like a huge weight off your shoulders.

It's a feeling that will change the way you feel and secure a better future.

Being able to talk about the challenges and pressures you face rather than using distractions for them is the biggest thing you can do.

Real men cry.

Real men deal with their issues and aren't afraid to let go and open up. The options are there for you to do so... don't be afraid.

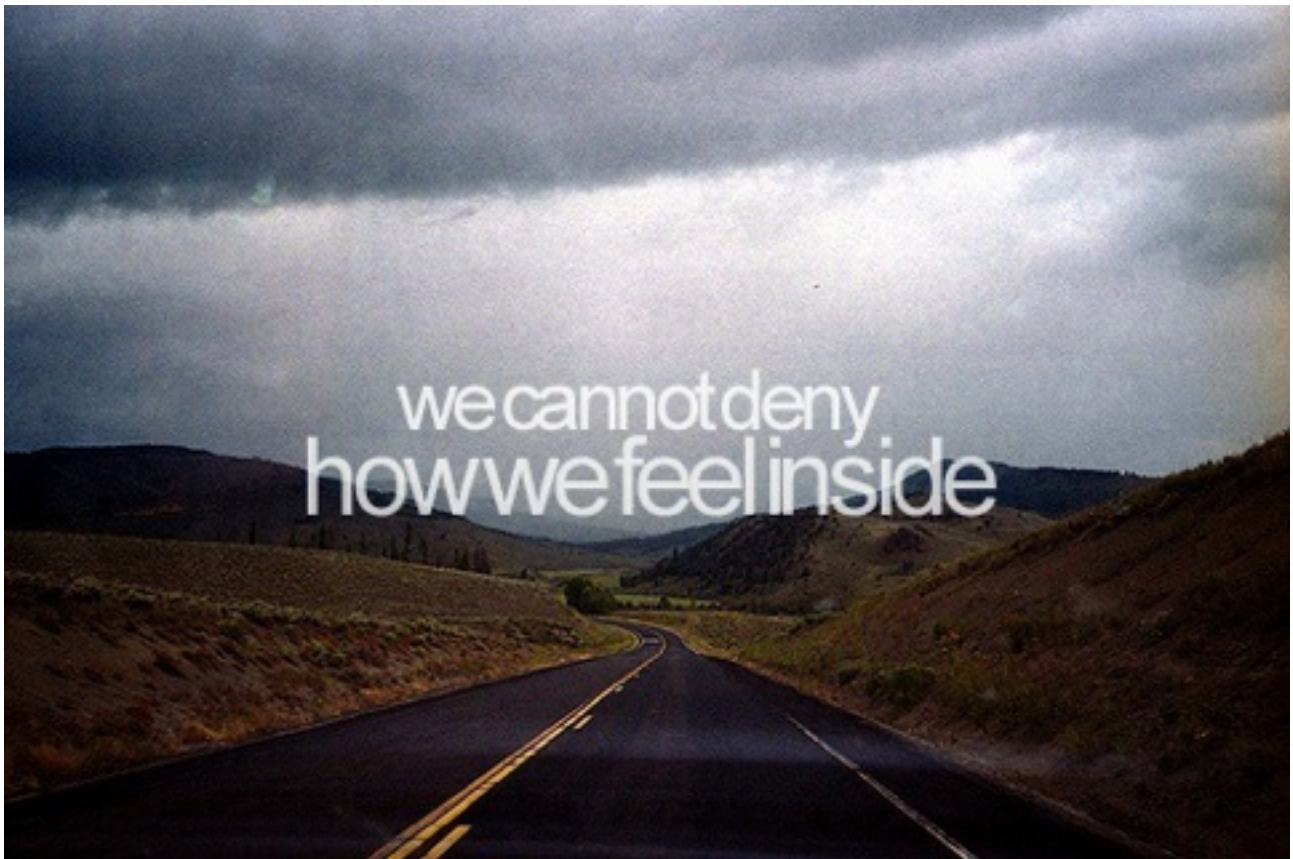
It can be as simple as writing it down.

Write how you feel, write the challenging thoughts you're having all down on paper. Sometimes just writing your thoughts allows you to remove a bit of that weight off your shoulders.

Feel ok doing it? Take it to the next stage and share the letter with a loved one, with a friend, and this will open up conversation.

Conversation which now allows you to verbally open up too.

Get it all out, cry like you've never cried before if it feels right, express yourself and just know that opening up shows strength, courage and true masculinity.



Write it down, say it aloud, talk to someone, anyone... just express how you feel. Open up and watch the weight from your shoulders fall.

## 2. Take Responsibility

Are you responsible for your thoughts, your life and everything you have going on right now?

Of course you are.

But do you take responsibility or shift blame?

This principle is often better received by the more masculine characters. The men who find it hard to open up but don't shy away from responsibility.

Typically the men who take responsibility naturally often had an upbringing which involved traditional male morales.

'Don't cry son' and 'Be a man about it' were probably words that came out of your parents mouths often, and although this is damaging in terms of handling feelings taking responsibility should become easier.

Think about it...

You're not in great shape. Who's to blame?

Don't blame the fact there's only fast food restaurants around work, don't shift the blame to not having time to workout, don't blame your wife for handing you a beer every night...

You're to blame.

Hate your job?

Take responsibility for it. Tell your boss, address why you hate it, leave and find another job.

Don't just complain and keep living life unfulfilled. You're in control of the situation you're in right now.

These thoughts, these pressures and how you deal with them is again all down to you.

No book, no person and no thing can have an effect on you unless you allow it.

Fed up with how you look? Do something about it. Workout for 15 minutes in the morning, prepare meals to take to work which are healthy and drink more water...

Fed up with your marriage? Do something about it. Ask your partner what you do that makes them happy and spend more time doing it. You do the same.

Give it your best shot, take responsibility for the issues in the marriage and spend time improving it. If it still makes you unhappy, after doing all you can then maybe it's time to move on?

Not enough time to do things? Wake up earlier.

It really isn't hard. The only hard thing about change is owning up to the responsibility of it.

Sure there will be challenges along the way, but knowing that you're responsible for how you deal with those challenges makes them easier to handle.

You control your life, your thoughts and everything that happens from now on.

Stop blaming others...

We love it. Shifting blame on to something or someone else keeps our ego intact.

We love to moan too...

Moaning about the Mrs is pretty common, but maybe it's you that needs to change?

We moan about the football, our work, the weather and politics...

How slow our computer is, the fact our phone's just ran out of battery, traffic, the person on the train next to us playing their music too loud...

Stop moaning and stop blaming others.

***'When you change the way you look at things,  
the things you look at change' - Wayne Dyer***

Another thing to take responsibility for is your purpose.

What do you want from life?

Self analysing and defining your purpose is one of the best things you can do for future growth.

Remember nothing is holding you back apart from self limiting thoughts so take responsibility.

What you want to achieve from life can be achieved if you take responsibility.

I recently shifted the definition of my purpose and what I wanted from life and my motivation completely changed.

When you're in alignment with your purpose you become more excited to live.

Looking to spend more time with your family and work less? Live by this purpose, disconnect from work distractions and spend quality time with your family.

Looking to start your own business, working from home serving others? Put the plans in place and get the ball rolling.

Define your purpose and live in alignment with achieving that purpose.

Another good thing to do is live by your ideal values...

Who is the man you want to be?

Write down the ideal you in 10 years time and write down the most important values of that person. Are they bold? Loving? Funny? Confident? Then start living your life by them daily...

If you want to be a confident guy, work on it.

Want to be more loving? Be it.

Do you want to be more outgoing? Start socialising more.

Define your values and live by them...

You're in complete control of your thoughts and your life. Everything you do is your choice. Take responsibility and start living life as you want too.

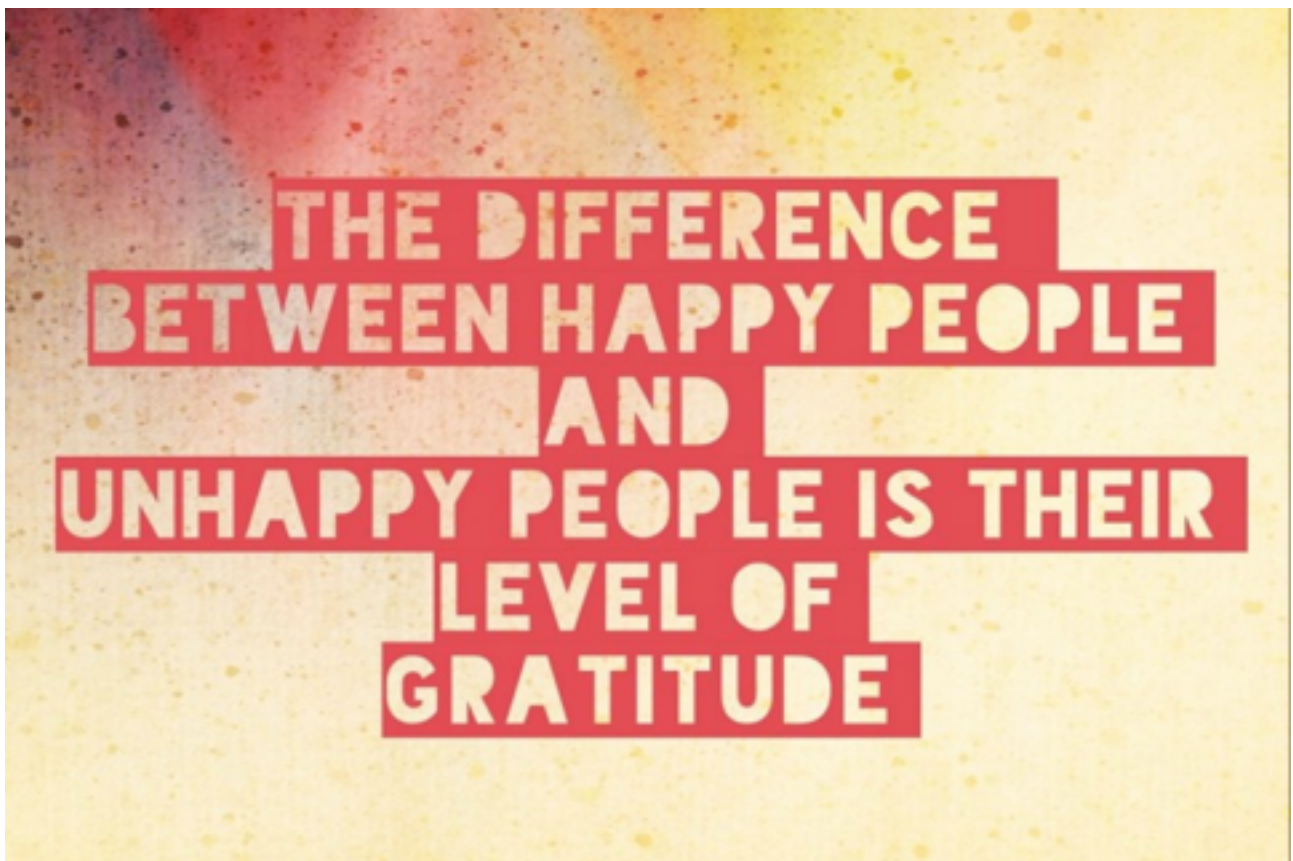


### 3. Find Gratitude

One of the best ways to deal with negative thoughts is gratitude. What are you grateful for?

Whenever you worry about a situation, shift your attention to things you're grateful for.

Struggling to pay the bills this month? Sure that's a worry but worrying about the situation isn't going to help. Shift your thoughts to things you're grateful for... Your family, your friends, the country you live in, the fact you even have a house to live in and assets to fall back on.



Worrying puts you in a negative state of mind making it a lot harder to get out of the situation you're in.

**Gratitude puts you in a positive state of mind, making it easier to deal with the challenges.**

You can find gratitude in a number of things...

Your health, the country you live in, your family, friends, resources available to you, nature, laughter and even the fact you have a roof over your head.

Sure they seem minor, but when you actually concentrate on them and how lucky you are to have the smaller things in life things change.

About 18 months ago I worried about money.

It was probably partly down to my upbringing, as my Dad liked to save and always looked for the cheapest option.

He was financially secure, but saved for an early retirement (which never happened).

If we were to go on holiday, he'd find a cheaper flight.

If I wanted a new pair of Football boots, we'd go for the cheaper option.

I have nothing against this, he brought me up right and made me appreciate things better.

But in the end his outlook on money made me rebel, avoiding saving, making financially wise decisions and simply spending what I had.

Why?

Because he saved for a future which never happened...

I remember how during his breakdown he started to buy more and be less restrictive with his money. Almost like he was feeling guilty for 'years of saving'.

I learnt from what my Dad did 'wrong' and rebelled.

I earned money and spent it on luxury holidays, clothing, cars, fine dining and more which allowed me to 'enjoy' life more...

Or so I thought.

I quickly came to realise it's all about the balance. Making financially wise decisions (I now save 20% of my monthly income and lock it away so it's hard to get my hands on) but I also still spend money to enjoy myself.

Win win.



My worry of money and not having enough probably stemmed from how my Dad kept his money saved away and hunted for bargains.

My Mum wasn't as much of a bargain hunter as my Dad, being more open to spending but as a full time Mum with numerous part time jobs on the side she never had a lot of money to spend.

She did well though, cleaning, childminding, working in a Creche... but she typically lived with a 'lack of money' due to having to work less to bring me and my brother up.

I worried about money. A lot.

Working for yourself also makes the worry stronger.

My expenses were high due to my rebellion and my poor financial intelligence and income wasn't as high as it was.

But why was I worrying?

I had a family, a 4 bedroom house, a car, my Mum had a house... Why the hell was I worrying?

As soon as that worry crept in I shifted my attention to gratitude.

I was grateful for my family, the roof over my head, the car I had, the security, even the fact I was alive and breathing. The fact I could walk, run... pour myself a glass of cold water.

This shift to gratitude changes your mindset.

You'll go from feeling 'lack' and worrying in a negative mind state to feeling positive and full of abundance.

Yes, the money issues were still there but I was in a better state to deal with them.

I cut back expenses, the positive mental state allowed me to work better and pull in more money.

Things improved, and improved, and kept on improving.

Do I still worry? Sure. Everybody does. But shifting my attention to what I have rather than what I don't (or what doesn't exist) helps me deal with it.

## 4. Invest In You

A common display of depression is letting yourself go physically.

Emotional eating, drinking more alcohol, exercising less and neglecting personal hygiene are issues you may be facing.

Investing in yourself and continually looking to grow as a person is another thing you should be shifting more attention into.

Alcohol abuse is again more common with men.

Why?

Because we bottle up our emotions and abuse ourselves mentally and physically by drinking excessively.

It makes that pain, that worry, those emotional issues which are starting to resurface slightly easier to deal with.

But why are men letting themselves go?

Why aren't we in shape, why do we drink a lot, eat the wrong things and abuse our bodies?

It comes down to a lack of responsibility again.

We feel challenged, we struggle to deal with the pressures of being a man but we don't do anything about it.

Think about this for a minute...

**How much time and money do you invest in to the maintenance of your house?**

The heating, electrics, the rent/mortgage, the furniture, the electronics, even maybe the cleaner and gardener?

**But how much do you invest in you?**

I'm not just talking about monetary value either... I'm talking about time. What do you do daily that makes you happy?

Investing in yourself can be as simple as spending 30 minutes doing something you and only you love to do (alone).

Becoming self reliant and being able to enjoy your own company is one of the best things you can do.

Exercise more, eat better, drink more water, meditate, read more, push comfort zones, take up a hobby, get a massage, dress better, get a haircut and start a business... These are just a handful of things you can do for yourself.

You're number 1.

You should be your main priority.

Your family and friends are only going to benefit massively from you working on your personal growth.

Time isn't an excuse either.

'Lack of time' shows a lack of motivation and a state of minor depression.

Don't have 30 minutes to invest into yourself and your self growth? Get up 30 minutes earlier or go to bed 30 minutes later.

Struggle to get up in the mornings? You're not on purpose with how you want to live your life.

In fact waking up earlier and having a productive morning routine is one of the best things you can do...

Set your alarm an hour earlier and do some exercise, read, journal, meditate... work on your self growth.

Doing this in the morning before working will set you up for a more productive day.

Mornings shouldn't be a struggle. Every morning try and feel like it's Christmas morning and you're a child once more. Starting your day like this will lead to a more positive outcome...

Of course every morning might not be like this... hangovers, feeling tired and wanting to just relax are all natural.

Listen to your mind and your body, but 95% of the time wake up with purpose.

Still struggling to find time?

Get off your damn phone.

Disconnect from social media, emails, texts, phone calls and spend just 30 minutes on yourself.

One of the biggest reasons we lack productivity, motivation and inspiration is because we don't disconnect.

We don't spend time on us.

People think I'm crazy when I say the best way to get more productive with work and in general is to take time off.

What? I'm saying I need to work more and you're telling me to stop working?

When you disconnect, focus on yourself and your personal development, and then when you go to work you'll feel more inspired and more motivated to get stuff done.

You'll work more efficiently, you'll work harder and you'll be more creative.

I was there... glued to my phone throughout the day. I'm still guilty of it but I know the importance of disconnecting and spending time on me.

Do something which benefits you.

Book a massage, go and workout...

It can be as simple as that.

Just shift your attention, shift your focus on you.

You're number 1.

It's easy to invest in a house, pay for a cleaner to clean, pay to get your car washed and lawn cut... but invest in you.

**The best investment you will ever make is you.**

## 5. Who's Around You?

Another key principle is to build your network and surround yourself with the right people in alignment with your purpose.

Who are your friends?

Who do you work with?

Who are your family and how do they act?

The people you surround yourself with will have a huge impact on your mood.

Try spend an hour with a positive, successful person and see how you feel. Then spend an hour with a depressed, unfulfilled, low driven person and see how you feel.

Most counsellors need therapy. Why?

Because there job drains them. It pulls down their mood and it effects them emotionally.

Sure some good counsellors can completely disconnect from other peoples feelings but for most... the people that come through those doors each day damage their emotional well being.

In business, Masterminds, events and having a coach are extremely important.

Without surrounding yourself with the right people and without having the right mentors your growth can become damaged.

I have mentors, I have done for the past 12 months and it's been the best decision I've ever made.

My business mentor helps systemise and show me how to take things to the next level... I then invested in another mentor who helped me breakthrough the pain of my Dad and allowed me to handle my relationships better.

I'm always on the hunt for more mentors to show me the way...

Surrounding myself with people who can aid my personal growth seriously is the best decision I will ever make.

If I want to learn Spanish what would you do to accelerate how fast you learn it?

You'd find a teacher, and surround yourself with people who could speak Spanish.

So if you want to start feeling more positive, what should you do?

Find people who are positive, and surround yourself with people who will help aid a positive state of mind.

Building your network of the right people for your forward growth is so important...

What will happen to old friends?

Typically you'll start to drift from a lot of them. If they're negative, if they're halting your growth you'll probably easily find yourself finding less time and effort to keep up the relationship.

Does your partner not make you feel positive? Is she holding you back from purpose? Again, that's a decision you'll naturally make as you start to surround yourself with the right people.

Do you go to the gym with someone who moans about work, his Mrs, and typically trains badly?

Stop training with them.

Try training with someone who's positive, who trains hard and is in better shape than you... now see how different you train (and feel).



But how do you extend your network?

Talk to people. Don't worry what others think, just talk to more people. You never know who you might come in to conversation with...

Go to meet ups, events, enrol on a course... get yourself out there and look for your new network of people.

There's no excuses, being online now allows you connect with positive, like minded, successful people without even physically meeting them.

Most of my mentors I speak to via Skype - I've met them once or twice but I don't necessarily need to.

Sure a physical relationship is more powerful but there's no excuses here.

Meet more people, connect with successful and positive people and remove the negative relationships from your life.

Things will change...

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## Your Next Move

So where do you go from here?

Are you going to open up?

Deal with your emotions the right way?

Will you take action on these principles or will you save them for a later date?

If there's one thing I've learnt it's that 'there's no better time than now'.

**ACT: Action changes things.**

Don't put it off...

My Dad read a lot of self help books, he had a Psychology degree. But he didn't take action on what he digested.

***If he did, I can almost guarantee he'd still be here today and I wouldn't be writing this.***

Put into practice what you've read.

Now.

If you need further support or you want to talk... hit me up.

Send me an email on [paul@pmcgregor.com](mailto:paul@pmcgregor.com) or visit [www.pmcgregor.com](http://www.pmcgregor.com).

I'm happy to help.

In fact, I'd prefer it if you did.

If you got this far, send me an email. Let me know what you think...

I'd love to connect and hear your story too?

I had to face a lot of fears to write this, and I even debated doing so... So If this post resonated with you I want you to do me a favour.

Share it.

Send it to your friends, family and feel free to share my name and my website ([www.pmcgregor.com](http://www.pmcgregor.com))

The more awareness we can gain the better we can make things.

The facts are shocking... they're there in plain site.

Lets do something about them.

Signing out,

*Paul McGregor*